



Pollution Prevention Services

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FACT SHEET

An Environmental Management System (EMS) is an organized and formal approach to managing environmental issues within an organization. It is based on the concept that environmental aspects should be managed in the same way that a company or public entity manages its core business functions and links the environmental concerns with economic considerations. An EMS recognizes the need for a **proactive** approach to environmental issues, by emphasizing opportunities such as increased employee awareness and operational changes to improve environmental performance.

What does an EMS include?

This continual improvement process includes:

- setting environmental *policy*
- conducting *planning* to ensure success of the policy
- *implementing* practices, programs, and procedures
- *monitoring and measuring* to evaluate environmental performance
- *checking for and correcting* identified problems
- periodically *reviewing* the entire system at a top management level

How does an EMS complement a Quality Management System program?

An effective EMS is built on Total Quality Management System concepts. To improve environmental management, you need to focus not only on what things happen, but also why they happen. Over time, the systematic identification and correction of system deficiencies lead to better environmental, and overall organizational, performance.

What are the benefits of an EMS?

- improved environmental performance
- improved compliance with regulations
- fewer accidents in the workplace
- improved fulfillment of customer requirements
- reduced liability exposure
- reduced costs and increased efficiency
- employee education and increased involvement
- enhanced public credibility

What is ISO?

ISO 14000 is the evolving international standard defining an appropriate environmental management system for many kinds of organizations. It provides a systems approach patterned after the Plan, Do, Check, Act model. ISO 14000, the environmental standards, is one of a series of standards developed by the International Organization of Standardization. Other models for an EMS also exist.

Pollution Prevention Services

Pollution Prevention Services' staff can provide additional information on EMS development. On-site presentations, workshops, and site evaluations are offered to organizations throughout Iowa, including general EMS overview and task-specific assistance. These services are confidential, non-regulatory and offered at no cost.

Who is doing EMS?

Many companies in Iowa have developed an EMS, including four meat processors participating in a pilot program sponsored by the EPA, DNR and Iowa Waste Reduction Center.

For more information, contact: Jeff Fiagle at (515) 281-5353.